

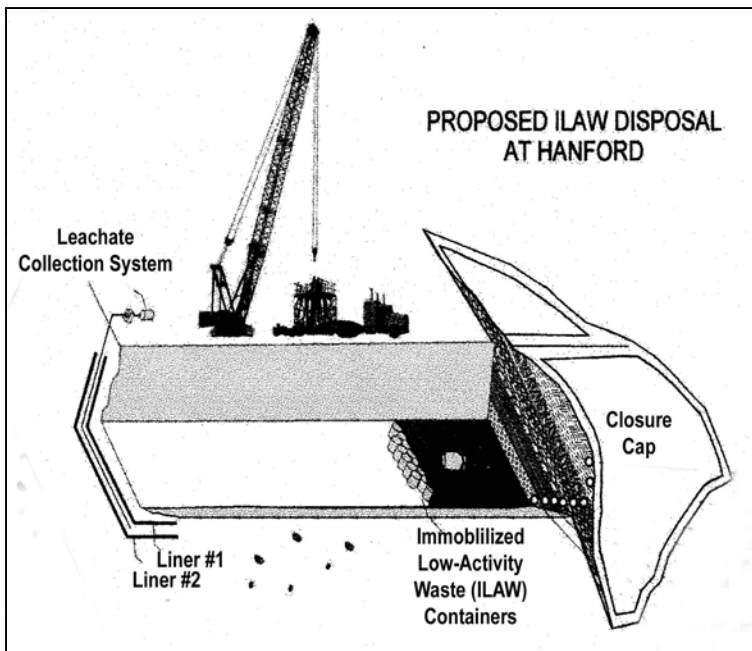
TANK WASTE REMEDIATION SYSTEM PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FACT SHEET

Proposed Changes to the Tank Waste Program:

The U. S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of River Protection is proposing modifications to the tank waste program. The proposed changes require DOE to issue a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to the Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS) EIS issued in 1996.

The proposed changes are:

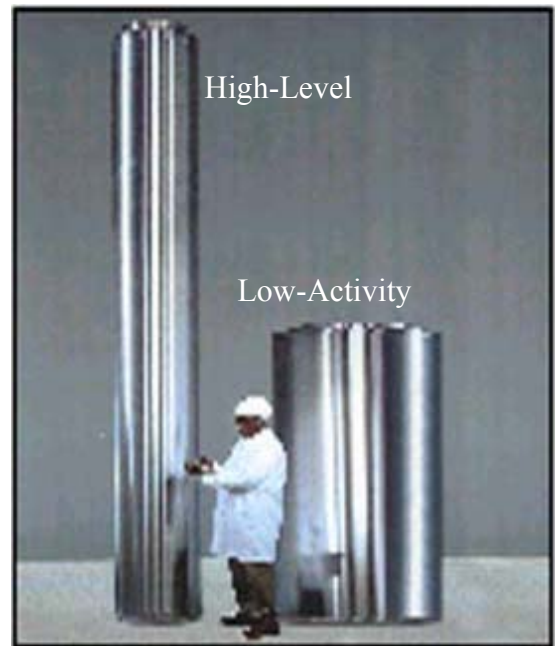
1. Vitrify low-activity tank waste as monoliths (a single encased piece of glass) in a canister, rather than gravel-sized pieces of glass (cullets).
2. Permanently dispose of the vitrified monoliths in 6 regulatory compliant trenches occupying approximately 65 acres in the 200 Areas, versus long-term storage in 66 concrete vaults occupying approximately 25 acres in the 200 East Area.



Artist's conception of the proposed Low-Activity waste trenches

Background:

In the Record of Decision for the TWRS EIS in 1997, DOE decided to vitrify low-activity waste in cullet form and store it at Hanford in near-surface concrete vaults. The waste could then either be retrieved or disposed of in the vaults. Proposed changes call for the molten glass to be poured into containers, sealed, and disposed of in near-surface Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) compliant trenches with liners and leachate collection systems, and capped with earthen barriers.



High-Level and Low-Activity vitrified waste containers

Office of River Protection

Alternatives for Low-Activity Glass Waste Disposal

Below are proposed location/no-action alternatives for Low-Activity Waste disposal. They are:

1. *Disposition of vitrified low-activity waste in regulatory compliant trenches in the 200 East Area of the Hanford Site (this alternative reflects the Office of River Protection's current proposal).*
2. *Disposition of vitrified low-activity waste in regulatory compliant trenches in the 200 West Area of the Hanford Site.*
3. *No Action alternative*
 - In the Supplemental EIS, the No Action Alternative is the Phased Implementation Alternative selected in the TWRS EIS Record of Decision.
 - This alternative would implement the TWRS EIS Record of Decision regarding onsite interim storage of the vitrified low-activity waste in cullet form in concrete vaults located in the 200 East Area.
 - The analysis of this alternative will be updated with information that has become available since the TWRS EIS was published to ensure an appropriate comparison among alternatives.

Public Involvement and Comment:

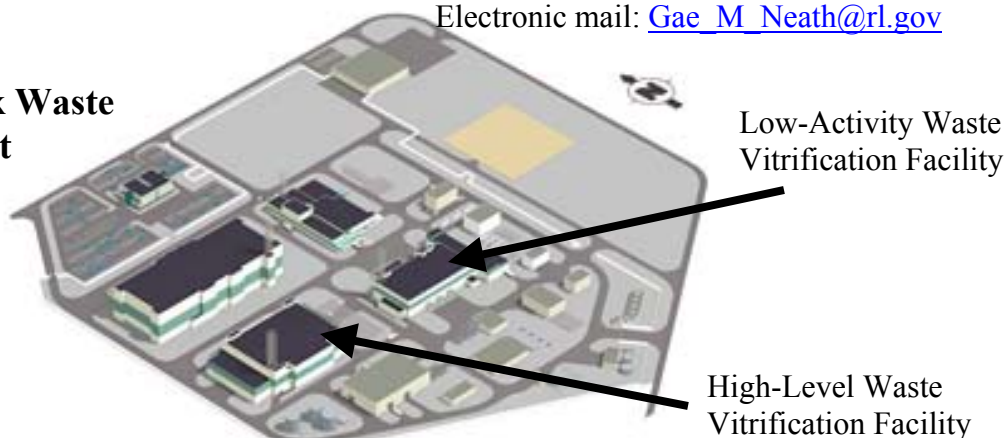
DOE invites public comment on the scope of the alternatives and associated potential environmental impacts to be addressed in the Supplemental EIS. The public scoping period extends until August 26, 2002. Oral and written comments will be received at a public scoping meeting to be held on August 20, 2002, in Richland, Washington, at the Richland Red Lion Hanford House, Benton-Franklin Room, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

To review the Notice of Intent to prepare the Supplemental EIS, (published in the Federal Register on July 8, 2002) visit the Office of River Protection website at <http://www.hanford.gov/orp>, under the heading "Public Documents." Information is also available at the U.S. DOE Public Reading Room located at Washington State University, Tri-Cities Campus, 2770 University Drive, Richland, Washington.

Written comments must be postmarked by August 26, 2002. Comments postmarked after that date will be considered to the extent practicable. Please submit comments to:

Ms. Gae Neath
U.S. Department of Energy
Office of River Protection
P.O. Box 450, Mail Stop H6-60
Richland, WA 99352
Electronic mail: Gae_M_Neath@rl.gov

Hanford's Tank Waste Treatment Plant



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why is a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) necessary?

Following a Supplemental Analysis in March 2001, DOE committed to undertake further National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis of changes in plans for disposing of vitrified low-activity waste. The Supplemental EIS will evaluate environmental impacts from low-activity waste disposal alternatives.

2. How is the current planning different from the original plan?

Originally, vitrified low-activity waste was to be in cullet form (gravel-sized pieces of glass) and stored on-site in near-surface concrete vaults. The waste could then either be retrieved within 50 years or disposed of in the vaults. Current planning calls for the molten glass to be poured into containers in monolith form (a solid glass block), sealed, and disposed of in RCRA-compliant trenches with liners and leachate collection systems, and earthen barriers installed above the trenches.

3. Will all the vitrified tank waste be disposed of in these trenches on-site?

No, only the low-activity waste will be disposed of in trenches on-site. Vitrified high-level waste will be shipped to a national deep geologic repository for disposal. It will be stored at Hanford until the repository is available.

4. Will other waste forms be disposed of in these trenches?

No, only vitrified low-activity waste will be disposed of in the trenches. If DOE later proposes to dispose of other low-activity waste forms in these or other trenches, further analysis of environmental impacts will be required.

5. How are these trenches different from the trenches analyzed in the Draft EIS for Hanford Site Solid (Radioactive and Hazardous) Waste Program (DOE/EIS-0286)?

The low-activity waste trenches will accept only vitrified low-activity waste from the Hanford tanks. The Solid Waste Program EIS analyzes other wastes planned for disposal at Hanford.

6. What opportunities will there be for public comment on this Supplemental EIS?

A public scoping period extending through August 26th, including a public meeting, will allow input into the development of alternatives for analysis in the Supplemental EIS. When the draft Supplemental EIS is prepared, another public comment period and regional meetings will occur. Following that comment period, comments will be considered in the preparation of the final Supplemental EIS.

All comments and questions can be directed to:

Ms. Gae Neath

U.S. Department of Energy

Office of River Protection

P.O. Box 450, Mail Stop H6-60

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